

# PRENTICE COMPUTER CENTRE

UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND, ST. LUCIA, QUEENSLAND, AUSTRALIA. 4067.



## NEWSLETTER

N-269

7-December-81

### CONTENTS

- 1.0 1982 Developments and Charge Rates.
- 2.0 Maintenance Charges 1982.
- 3.0 Engineering Consulting.
- 4.0 Redundant Computing Equipment.
- 5.0 Systems not available over Christmas Break.
- 6.0 End of CPUNCH Facility.
- 7.0 Uncollected Outputs.
- 8.0 Disposal of DECtapes.
- 9.0 Library News.
- 10.0 SPSS Corner - Frequencies Procedure  
and Insufficient Space.
- 11.0 Width, an aid for Typesetting.
- 12.0 Information Concerning Courses.
- 13.0 Floppy Diskettes.
- 14.0 Departmental Purchases of Equipment, Services and  
General Supplies from the Prentice Computer Centre.

Principle Service CentresExtensions

Operations Manager	3471
Contract Programming & Feasibility Studies	3023
System Status Automatic Answering	3101
General Enquiries	3018
Training & Courses	3022

CONSULTING

PROBLEM AREA	MAIL BOX	NAME AND EXTENSION
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## Operations and Programming

Accounts	ACCOUNTS	Ms C. Walker	2188
Cobol	COBOL	Ms B. King	3020
Commands and utilities	COMMANDS	Mr R. Morrison	2836
		Mr M. Robbie	2926
Database (VG, 1022)	DATABASE	Ms A. Shanahan	3020
Fortran	FORTRAN	Mr R. Armstrong	3020
		Mr J. Currie	2837
Graphics	GRAPHICS	Mr M. Williams	2837
Micros	MICROS	Mr B. Peterson	2926
Network	NETWORK	Mr B. Claire	2926
Operations	OPERATIONS	Senior operator	3212
PDP-11 software	PDP11	Ms N. Meier	3941
		Mr N. Richter	2837
Program Library, Tapes	LIBRARY	Ms L. Roberts	3943
Statistics	STATISTICS	Mr B. Maher	3022
		Mr C. McGovern	2836
Text processing, Typesetting	TEXT	Mr A. Broughton	3022
Non-specific problems	OPERATIONS	Senior operator	3212

## Engineering and maintenance

Development and communications	ENGIN	Mr G. Rees	3288
Mini/Micro support	ENGIN	Mr C. Lythall	3942
Mini and terminal maintenance	MAINT	Ms M. Kenley	3938

## Griffith University:

Consulting	7561
Computer Services	7560

## 1.0 1982 DEVELOPMENTS AND CHARGE RATES

The Equipment and Maintenance Committee has approved the installation of additional primary memory and disk storage on the VAX 11/780. The COBOL language will also be implemented on the VAX for teaching purposes. Communications equipment will be installed to allow additional terminals to have access to the VAX 11/780 system. Senate has approved that the SLOTS charge rates can be applied to the VAX 11/780 system no later than 1.3.82 (we are aiming at implementation from 1.2.82). These rates will be approximately one third of the KL prime shift rates for an equivalent job and be constant over all shifts. It should be noted that primary memory is not charged on the VAX system.

Consistent with University policy to adjust to the tight financial position, the Centre's 1982 operating budget includes a real reduction in staff over 1981 levels of 5% of total salary costs (9% of salary costs funded from the General Recurrent Funds of the University). This may result in a lesser grade of service for users in some areas.

Senate also approved the following adjustments to charges.

- (a) A reduction of 15% for the internal charge of primary memory on the KL10 General Purpose Computer no later than 1.3.82 (planned implementation 1.2.82). This provides an overall reduction of 9% for the average job mix.
- (b) The charge rate for data entry will be \$12 per hour from 1.3.82.
- (c) Device set-up charges (unchanged since 1974) will be increased as follows:

Set up Printer for non-standard stationery	from \$1.00 to \$1.50
Set up for Digital plotter	from .60 to \$1.00
Mounting of removable Disk Pack	from \$1.00 to \$1.50
Mounting of Magnetic Tapes	from .40 to .60

- (d) The labour rate on projects involving 25 hours or less of continuous work will be increased from \$12.00 hr (unchanged since 1974) to \$20 hr as from 1.1.82.
- (e) The charges for mini-computer maintenance will be increased by 10% as from 1.1.82. Labour is the major cost component of our maintenance charge and the cost increase reflects part of the 1981 inflationary wage cost increase. The alternative service provided by the equipment manufacturer will still be 30% to 47% higher depending on the equipment configuration.

N-269  
7DEC81

Our expectation is that in 1982 the demand for computing services will continue to increase. Despite the reduction in our staffing levels our aim will be to maintain a high grade of service. Nevertheless, with the best will in the world, there will be times when our resources will not be sufficient to meet the demands made upon us. I request your cooperation.

Director  
extension 2189

## 2.0 MAINTENANCE CHARGES 1982

There will be some changes to the maintenance services and charges offered by the Centre in 1982. Full details will be published soon, however the following brief is indicative.

### Terminals

Terminal maintenance charges will generally remain the same. The 1981 arrangement for maintenance on Diablo terminals by Mitsui will stand.

Some terminals will no longer be maintained in 1982 e.g. TTY 33/35/38, GE Terminets, some TI700's.

### Mini Computers

The maintenance charges for mini computers will increase by 10%. Detailed pricing will be available in January. The service will remain the same as a full on-site preventative and remedial maintenance service.

### Microprocessor Systems

The current 'partial' service contracts will no longer be available. Apple and Sorcerer micros will be serviced on a return-to-Centre basis at the then current hourly rates. Griffith users can continue to return defective items to the Batch Station.

The main reason for this change is that, although we were hoping to keep maintenance charges fairly low, these devices have not proved very reliable overall. Rather than increase charges generally, I felt that this scheme might be more equitable.

### Contracts and Small Jobs

The hourly rate for contract work will increase from \$12 to \$20 per hour as from 1.1.82. A system is being implemented where the charging for contracts will be handled automatically through the accounting system. This means that no work will be started without a QUBAC account number and the appropriate authorisation.

Graham Rees  
extension 3288

### 3.0 ENGINEERING CONSULTING

There is a new procedure for engineering consulting. Graham Rees, Colin Lythall or Alan Langdon are available for consulting and may be contacted as follows:

1. MAIL. Details of the new MAIL consulting service were published in newsletter N268, 26 Oct 81 and we would like to encourage use of this facility. We have had many complaints recently about the difficulty of reaching us by phone - save the frustration and MAIL your enquiry in. Mail box details are:

Consulting	ENGIN	G. Rees	x3288
		C. Lythall	x3942
		A. Langdon	x3942
Mini & Terminal Maintenance	MAINT	M. Kenley	x3938

Type HELP CONSULT for a full listing.

2. PHONE. There are many enquiries which can be handled quickly and efficiently by phone.
3. APPOINTMENT. If you wish to consult in person you will now have to make an appointment. Either phone Ms M. Kenley (x 3938) or MAIL an appointment request to MAINT or ENGIN. It would be helpful if you would indicate the subject matter to be discussed so we have time to "brush up" on our facts.

This service is provided for University departments on University business and not for personal "home" computing problems or postgraduate student advice, however, we have been known to discuss problems over an ale or two (etc.). We are generally happy to help where possible, but our work load is very heavy at present.

N-269  
7DEC81

If you don't feel the service we offer is up to par or if you have problems contacting us or any other suggestions, please contact Maralyn on extension 3938.

Graham Rees  
extension 3288

#### 4.0 REDUNDANT COMPUTING EQUIPMENT

I have had the opportunity recently to sell some redundant memory modules for PDP11's outside the University. These particular items were 16Kw MF11 memories which have become redundant as it is more economical to replace multiple modules with a single 128Kw module to save backplane space. There may be other modules and peripherals which are no longer required but may be of use to other departments or may be saleable outside.

The Centre is prepared to compile a list for advertising in this newsletter so that departments can negotiate directly with others. Please advise (MAIL to ENGIN or MAINT) department name, type of equipment, date of purchase, estimated condition and starting price if you wish to take advantage of this service.

Graham Rees  
extension 3288

#### 5.0 SYSTEMS NOT AVAILABLE OVER CHRISTMAS BREAK

Due to the reconfiguration of the communications equipment for the Central Communications Network, the KL, KA and VAX systems will not be available from 24 December until 1 January inclusive.

Di Ball  
extension 3471

N-269  
7DEC81

## 6.0 END OF CPUNCH FACILITY

As announced in our last newsletter our operator supported card punching service is being discontinued. In line to this, as from the end of December the Centre will discontinue our CPUNCH (disk to card) service. This is due to the high overheads of the minimum monthly charge to the Centre for this service.

Di Ball  
extension 3471

## 7.0 UNCOLLECTED OUTPUTS

Computer output which has not been collected two months after the time of printing will be destroyed unless special arrangements are made with the Operations Manager.

Di Ball  
extension 3471

## 8.0 DISPOSAL OF DECTAPES

The Centre is holding many dectapes that are either rented by users, or owned by users and stored here.

When the KL system was introduced, the Centre copied files from dectape to disk for any user who requested this service as the KL has no facility for reading or writing to dectape. As those dectapes have not been used since then, we request that users collect any dectapes belonging to them as soon as possible. On 1 February 1982 any rented dectapes will be scratched and any private dectapes remaining at the Centre will be sent to the owners.

Di Ball  
extension 3471

N-269  
7DEC81

## 9.0 LIBRARY NEWS

System 1022 is a general purpose data base management system. Version 114 D (127) of System 1022 has been placed on SYS. This version is a maintenance release; no new features have been added. If any problems are encountered or if you require information on 1022 please contact Leonie Roberts.

## 9.1 Solar Package

The Solar Package which was described in the Newsletter N-267, dated 28 September 1981, has been transferred from NEW: to UTI:.

Leonie Roberts  
extension 3943

## 10.0 SPSS CORNER - FREQUENCIES PROCEDURE AND INSUFFICIENT SPACE

When insufficient space is allowed for a FREQUENCIES (general mode) procedure for a variable list containing more than one element, SPSS drops variables until the number of values lies within the limit set by the given space.

One side-effect recently noticed is that for those variables which are not dropped in such circumstances, some values may be "broken up". For example, the result may be displayed as

<u>Code</u>	<u>Freq</u>		<u>Code</u>	<u>Freq</u>
1	1	instead of	1	4
1	2			
1	1			

At the moment, the only advice which can be offered is to ensure that sufficient space is allowed for the run. In this connection, remember

- (a) an EDIT run will supply information on the number of values which can be accommodated within the given space. (In some cases, this may not really be helpful). See N-265, July '81.
- (b) where tables are required for a large number of variables, it may be desirable to supply more than one card, e.g.

instead of	FREQUENCIES	GENERAL = V1 TO V30
use	FREQUENCIES	GENERAL = V1 TO V10
	FREQUENCIES	GENERAL = V11 TO V20
	FREQUENCIES	GENERAL = V21 TO V30

This may both avoid the problem mentioned above and reduce the need for a space switch.

Barry Maher  
extension 3022

#### 11.0 WIDTH, AN AID FOR TYPESETTING

It is often necessary in setting a heading in larger than normal point size to know exactly how much space it will require. Since this depends on not just the number of characters, but the characters themselves and varies from font to font, a program is provided to do the calculation. It has recently been upgraded to accept only valid point sizes and to show what point sizes are available for a particular font if an invalid one is chosen.

```
.RUN TPS:WIDTH(cr)

Typesetting width calculation program
Font number? 231(cr)
Point size? 48(cr)
Text: Have a HAPPY day!(cr)
      10.7 ems
      42 picas +  8 points
      180.0 mm. or 7.09 inches
Text: (cr)
Point size? (cr)
Font number? 600(cr)
Point size? 50(cr)
Point size 50 is not available in Font 600 Logos (University
shields)
Sizes are: 56 60 64 72 96
Point size? 60(cr)
Text: UQ(cr)
      1.7 ems
      8 picas +  8 points
      36.9 mm. or 1.45 inches
Text: _C
.
```

The dialogue is hierarchical, so that typing (cr) to a prompt returns to a higher level prompt. This makes it very economical in terms of key strokes and easy to use interactively.

Ian Burgess  
extension 2928

## 12.0 INFORMATION CONCERNING COURSES

The courses listed below will be offered during the period January-February 1982. Those designated (GU) will be conducted at Griffith University, in the Seminar Room of the AES Terminal Laboratory; all others will be held in the Client Room, Hawken Building, University of Queensland.

Note: Users not familiar with the DEC-10 system must attend the course "Introduction to PDP-10" before attending any other course.

Staff and postgraduate students are enrolled free of charge. All other users must pay the fee prescribed by the following schedule.

Introduction to PDP-10	-	\$40.00
1022	-	\$50.00
RUNOFF, SPSS	-	\$60.00
VAX conversion	-	\$20.00

1. Introduction to PDP-10 : January 11 - January 12  
2 full days 9-12am + 2-5pm each day
2. Introduction to PDP-10 : January 14 - January 15  
(GU) 2 full days 9-12am + 2-5pm each day
3. VAX Conversion Course : January 19  
1 full day 9-12am + 2-5pm
4. VAX Conversion Course : January 21  
(GU) 1 full day 9-12am + 2-5pm
5. SPSS : January 25 - January 29  
5 half days 9am-12.30pm each day
6. SPSS (GU) : January 25 - January 29  
5 half days 1.30pm-5pm each day
7. Introduction to PDP-10 : February 2 - February 3  
2 full days 9-12am + 2-5pm each day

N-269  
7DEC81

8. Introduction to PDP-10 : February 4 - February 5  
(GU) 2 full days 9-12am + 2-5pm each day
9. RUNOFF : February 8 - February 12  
5 half days 9-12am each day
10. RUNOFF (GU) : February 8 - February 12  
5 half days 2-5pm each day
11. Orientation Talks (UQ) : February 17 - February 19  
on Central Computing 10.00 am, 12 noon & 2.30 pm  
for new students  
(Room G13 Hawken Bldg)
12. 1022 : February 22 - February 26  
5 half days 9-12am each day
13. 1022 (GU) : February 22 - February 26  
5 half days 2-5pm each day

Enrolments for all courses may be made by consulting

Barry Maher  
extension 3022

### 13.0 FLOPPY DISKETTES

Should anyone have a requirement for compact storage and protection of floppy diskettes, Trendsetter Business Supplies (07)446648, has a range of file trays and rotary stands.

Dal Anderson  
extension 3166

N-269  
7DEC81

**14.0 DEPARTMENTAL PURCHASES OF EQUIPMENT, SERVICES**  
**AND GENERAL SUPPLIES FROM THE PRENTICE COMPUTER CENTRE**

Departments are reminded that any requests for equipment, services and general supplies from the Centre should show appropriate departmental QUBAC accounts to offset these purchases.

Dal Anderson  
extension 3166